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SOUTHWEST INFORMATION OFFICE: Dallas, Texas

Technical information: (972) 850-4800 BLSInfoDallas@bls.gov www.bls.gov/regions/southwest

Media contact: (972) 850-4800

Occupational Employment and Wages in Las Cruces, May 2013

Workers in the Las Cruces Metropolitan Statistical Area had an average (mean) hourly wage of \$18.64 in May 2013, about 17 percent below the nationwide average of \$22.33, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Regional Commissioner Stanley W. Suchman noted that, after testing for statistical significance, wages in the local area were significantly lower than their respective national averages in 17 of 22 major groups including legal; sales and related; and management. Wage levels in the five remaining groups were not statistically different from their respective national averages.

When compared to the nationwide distribution, local employment was more highly concentrated in 8 of the 22 occupational groups, including education, training, and library; personal care and service; and architecture and engineering. Conversely, nine groups had employment shares significantly below their national representation, including transportation and material moving; production; and sales and related. (See [table A](#) and [box note](#) at end of release.)

Table A. Occupational employment and wages by major occupational group, United States and the Las Cruces Metropolitan Statistical Area, and measures of statistical significance, May 2013

Major occupational group	Percent of total employment			Mean hourly wage			
	United States	Las Cruces		United States	Las Cruces		Percent difference ⁽¹⁾
Total, all occupations	100.0%	100.0%		\$22.33	\$18.64	*	-17
Management	4.9	4.6	*	53.15	37.79	*	-29
Business and financial operations	5.0	3.7	*	34.14	26.03	*	-24
Computer and mathematical	2.8	2.0	*	39.43	34.54	*	-12
Architecture and engineering	1.8	3.0	*	38.51	36.75		-5
Life, physical, and social science	0.9	1.0	*	33.37	30.08	*	-10
Community and social service	1.4	2.2	*	21.50	20.17		-6
Legal	0.8	0.4	*	47.89	32.74	*	-32
Education, training, and library	6.3	9.0	*	24.76	23.56		-5
Arts, design, entertainment, sports, and media	1.3	0.9	*	26.72	17.61	*	-34
Healthcare practitioners and technical	5.8	5.5		35.93	37.43		4
Healthcare support	3.0	3.2		13.61	12.74	*	-6
Protective service	2.5	4.2	*	20.92	23.18		11
Food preparation and serving related	9.0	9.7		10.38	9.67	*	-7
Building and grounds cleaning and maintenance	3.2	3.2		12.51	10.27	*	-18
Personal care and service	3.0	5.4	*	11.88	9.41	*	-21
Sales and related	10.6	8.8	*	18.37	12.73	*	-31
Office and administrative support	16.2	15.6		16.78	13.15	*	-22
Farming, fishing, and forestry	0.3	1.8	*	11.70	9.43	*	-19
Construction and extraction	3.8	5.0	*	21.94	15.96	*	-27

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

Table A. Occupational employment and wages by major occupational group, United States and the Las Cruces Metropolitan Statistical Area, and measures of statistical significance, May 2013 - Continued

Major occupational group	Percent of total employment			Mean hourly wage			
	United States	Las Cruces		United States	Las Cruces		Percent difference ⁽¹⁾
Installation, maintenance, and repair	3.9	3.2	*	21.35	18.40	*	-14
Production	6.6	4.2	*	16.79	14.75	*	-12
Transportation and material moving	6.8	3.3	*	16.28	12.32	*	-24

(1) A positive percent difference measures how much the mean wage in Las Cruces is above the national mean wage, while a negative difference reflects a lower wage.

* The percent share of employment or mean hourly wage for this area is significantly different from the national average of all areas at the 90-percent confidence level.

One occupational group—architecture and engineering—was chosen to illustrate the diversity of data available for any of the 22 major occupational categories. Las Cruces had 2,040 jobs in architecture and engineering, accounting for 3.0 percent of local area employment, significantly higher than the 1.8-percent national share. The average hourly wage for this occupational group locally was \$36.75 compared to the national wage of \$38.51.

With employment of 410, aerospace engineers was among the largest occupations within the architecture and engineering group, as were electronics engineers, except computer (270) and electrical and electronics engineering technicians (250). Among the higher paying jobs were electronics engineers, except computer, and aerospace engineers, with mean hourly wages of \$41.88 and \$41.29, respectively. At the lower end of the wage scale were civil engineering technicians (\$18.25) and electrical and electronics engineering technicians (\$28.02). (Detailed occupational data for architecture and engineering are presented in [table 1](#); for a complete listing of detailed occupations go to www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_29740.htm.)

Location quotients allow us to explore the occupational make-up of a metropolitan area by comparing the composition of jobs in an area relative to the national average. (See [table 1](#).) For example, a location quotient of 2.0 indicates that an occupation accounts for twice the share of employment in the area than it does nationally. In the Las Cruces metropolitan area, above average concentrations of employment were found in many of the occupations within the architecture and engineering group. For instance, electronics engineers, except computer, were employed at 3.9 times the national rate in Las Cruces, and aerospace engineers, at 11.3 times the U.S. average. The Las Cruces aerospace engineers location quotient was the third highest among all metropolitan areas in the country. On the other hand, architectural and civil drafters had a location quotient of 0.8 in Las Cruces, indicating that this particular occupation's local and national employment shares were similar.

These statistics are from the Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) survey, a federal-state cooperative program between BLS and State Workforce Agencies, in this case, the New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions.

Note

OES wage and employment data for the 22 major occupational groups in the Las Cruces Metropolitan Statistical Area were compared to their respective national averages based on statistical significance testing. Only those occupations with wages or employment shares above or below the national wage or share after testing for significance at the 90-percent confidence level meet the criteria.

Note: A value that is statistically different from another does not necessarily mean that the difference has economic or practical significance. Statistical significance is concerned with the ability to make confident statements about a universe based on a sample. It is entirely possible that a large difference between two values is not significantly different statistically, while a small difference is, since both the size and heterogeneity of the sample affect the relative error of the data being tested.

Technical Note

The Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) survey is a semiannual mail survey measuring occupational employment and wage rates for wage and salary workers in nonfarm establishments in the United States. Guam, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands are also surveyed, but their data are not included in the national estimates. OES estimates are constructed from a sample of about 1.2 million establishments. Forms are mailed to approximately 200,000 sampled establishments in May and November each year for a 3-year period. May 2013 estimates are based on responses from six semiannual panels collected in May 2013, November 2012, May 2012, November 2011, May 2011, and November 2010. The overall national response rate for the six panels is 75.3 percent based on establishments and 71.6 percent based on employment. The sample in the Las Cruces Metropolitan Statistical Area included 1,041 establishments with a response rate of 85 percent. For more information about OES concepts and methodology, go to www.bls.gov/news.release/ocwage.tn.htm.

The OES survey provides estimates of employment and hourly and annual wages for wage and salary workers in 22 major occupational groups and 821 detailed occupations for the nation, states, metropolitan statistical areas, metropolitan divisions, and nonmetropolitan areas. In addition, employment and wage estimates for 94 minor groups and 458 broad occupations are available in the national data. OES data by state and metropolitan/nonmetropolitan area are available from www.bls.gov/oes/current/oessrcst.htm and www.bls.gov/oes/current/oessrcma.htm, respectively.

The May 2013 OES estimates are based on the 2010 Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) system and the 2012 North American Industry Classification System (NAICS). Information about the 2010 SOC is available on the BLS website at <https://www.bls.gov/soc> and information about the 2012 NAICS is available at www.bls.gov/bls/naics.htm.

Area definitions

The substate area data published in this release reflect the standards and definitions established by the U.S. Office of Management and Budget.

The **Las Cruces Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA)** includes Doña Ana County in New Mexico.

Additional information

OES data are available on our regional web page at www.bls.gov/regions/southwest/home.htm. Answers to frequently asked questions about the OES data are available at www.bls.gov/oes/oes_ques.htm. Detailed technical information about the OES survey is available in our Survey Methods and Reliability Statement on the BLS website at www.bls.gov/oes/2013/may/methods_statement.pdf. Information in this release will be made available to sensory impaired individuals upon request – Voice phone: 202-691-5200; Federal Relay Service: 1-800-877-8339.

Table 1. Employment and wage data from the Occupational Employment Statistics survey, by occupation, Las Cruces Metropolitan Statistical Area, May 2013

Occupation ⁽¹⁾	Employment		Mean wages	
	Level ⁽²⁾	Location quotient ⁽³⁾	Hourly	Annual ⁽⁴⁾
Architecture and engineering occupations	2,040	1.7	\$36.75	\$76,430
Aerospace engineers	410	11.3	41.29	85,890
Civil engineers	40	0.29	35.42	73,670
Computer hardware engineers	90	2.2	42.45	88,300
Electrical engineers	140	1.6	37.50	78,000
Electronics engineers, except computer	270	3.9	41.88	87,100
Industrial engineers	60	0.5	48.20	100,250
Mechanical engineers	60	0.4	37.62	78,250
Architectural and civil drafters	40	0.8	17.30	35,970
Civil engineering technicians	60	1.6	18.25	37,960
Electrical and electronics engineering technicians	250	3.5	28.02	58,270
Engineering technicians, except drafters, all other	90	2.7	31.62	65,780
Surveying and mapping technicians	30	1.3	15.62	32,480

(1) For a complete listing of all detailed occupations in the Las Cruces MSA, see www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_29740.htm. (2) Estimates for detailed occupations do not sum to the totals because the totals include occupations not shown separately. Estimates do not include self-employed workers.

(3) The location quotient is the ratio of the area concentration of occupational employment to the national average concentration. A location quotient greater than one indicates the occupation has a higher share of employment than average, and a location quotient less than one indicates the occupation is less prevalent in the area than average.

(4) Annual wages have been calculated by multiplying the hourly mean wage by a 'year-round, full-time' hours figure of 2,080 hours; for those occupations where there is not an hourly mean wage published, the annual wage has been directly calculated from the reported survey data.